



**Titus – Lessons for the Church**  
**Wk. 5 In with the OLD**  
**By Pastor Jody May 05/22/2022**

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**Titus 2:1-2 ESV**

**2** But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. **2** Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

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**[BACKGROUND]**

We are coming to our 5<sup>th</sup> week in Titus so let's review again why we are studying this epistle of Paul:

**Titus 2:11-12 ESV**

[11] For the **grace of God** has appeared, bringing **salvation for all people**, [12] **training us to renounce** ungodliness and worldly passions, and **to live** self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

The Gospel **SAVES, TRAINS,** and **FUELS** us to **LIVE** on the Great Commission!

You know I have been giving this statement for the last 4 weeks, **to live on the great commission**, I know what I am referring to, but I wonder if you do and if you don't, I am sorry for the oversight. Please turn to (**Matt 28:18-20**; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:44-49; John 20:21; and Acts 1:8)

**18** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

This is what Paul was living off of, this is what Titus has turned his life over to Paul's service for. They were both living under the command of their Lord to make disciples, to evangelize them, and in doing so they were teaching Gentiles to observe all the things that go with the Gospel. Please notice the command expands to all nations, meaning ethnicities. Notice also there are no limitations as to sex, color, or age. While we know the Gospel and its' call



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is **not universal in that all are saved**, it is though, **universal in its' scope** of the offer to be saved.

Part of the issue you will see today in Crete is the actual building up of a church that is supposed to be **made up of different types of people**. You see the way that God has planned to build His church, to remake all things, to unite all things in His Son (Eph 1:10), through choosing **whom He will elect** to ensure that the Gospel cannot be controlled by stingy people. Salvation will not be monitored like power from a station, or rationed like water from a treatment plant, or held for ransom like gas, baby formula, or monoclonal antibody treatment by the government, as to who will receive the benefits of it or who will not. Part of the Gospel is that **God assures that all those that are supposed to receive it (SALVATION) will!**

Because God chooses to act that way, on Crete there are repentant, restored, redeemed, rescued, and refurbished people of God. He saved them, they belong to Him, and they are ready to be put in place to work, to help with the great commission. Titus was to get the family men from them, make the older ones leaders, drive out the false teachers, and now he will be given **specific parameters** of what to look for in the charter members of the organized church in Crete.

**Why is this important today!?** That's important because it **keeps the church from building what's attractive in its' own eyes**, eyes that have been tainted with secular culture:

**James 2:2-4** <sup>2</sup>For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, <sup>3</sup>and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," <sup>4</sup>have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?.

By going with the building blocks of what God says you start with, then God gets the credit. (Abraham and the offer to take spoils in Genesis 14 from King of Sodom)



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I want to look at the beginnings of these directions, I call them the **starting points**, of how to build the body for *Great Commission*. It would serve us well now to take notice of how to build the church for again this is a formula that has stood the test of time. **First**, Titus is going to start with **Personnel and not programs**, people matter more than a plan, place, or presentation. **Next** these people are **Holy or set apart**, and just like the elders they won't look like the rest of the world, they will **stand out** like a sore thumb. **Lastly**, they are **seasoned** in the **Gospel** and rely more on God than **worldly wisdom**.

That sounds like a good mix, huh? We want set apart, holy, seasoned, and heavenly wise people. You may be pleasantly surprised to find out though these folks, the starting point, are not the Knight Templars, Christian Ninjas, or even Religious Zealots. No, they are **COMMON** people, something that this world frowns on, that many people think plain Jane is just boring! But the beauty of the plan is that when God makes Christians, **He ages them like fine wine**, he takes the ordinary and makes them extraordinary, and a Christian that ages in the Gospel actually becomes better over time, as they are becoming like Jesus, it is exactly the type of person you want to help you start a church!

Now let's get back to the text and unfold this **Lesson for the Church** a little more and discover how these starting points are going to help Titus get done before Paul's other friends come and get Titus before the winter.

**1. It all starts with Personnel not Programs (vs. 1)**

**2** But as for you, teach what accords with **sound** doctrine.

**Sound** - ὑγιαίνω (*hygainō*) – **to be healthy**; possibly where we get hygiene from. Paul is commenting to Titus but as for you, you teach what is proper with **healthy doctrine/teaching**, good doctrine. **"But as for you"**, that phrase, what does that refer to?

**Titus 1:16 ESV**

<sup>16</sup> They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, **unfit** for any good work.



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Titus is being charged to be different from the False Teachers, the Party of the Circumcision from last week, those adding to the gospel, and leading others astray, the Cretans who already have tendencies to be weak willed. Their teaching, the False Teachers, at the end of v. 16, makes them **unfit** for any good work, the opposite of **sound**. In other words, Titus, you give people the healthy stuff, the things that help people to grow.

Titus, as you will see, your challenge as you raise up churches through elder/overseers is to **build a core body** of folks that will have certain **specific parameters**. Paul, in the next 10 verses, is going to give the specific type of people one should desire to have in your fledgling churches. If you were ever to plant a church, you can't just have one type of person. You should not just start off with the young, or the child rearing, or those of just one sex, just the extroverted, or just the scholarly, no, you need a certain mixture.

Also notice that Paul is not making a big deal on discipleship programs. He's not telling Titus you need seminaries, you need Beginner 101 classes, you need Sunday School, you need to develop Lifeway so you can have large amounts of Christian literature, Christian music, and Christian pop culture to produce the church we are trying to create (no that made America Evangelicals). No, the sound doctrine of the Gospel is all you need.

After that Titus it all **starts with people**, give them the Gospel and let them go.... You build a church with converted, humbled, and Holy Spirit indwelt people. It is all **about the people not the programs!**

Verses 2-10 of chapter 2 give 5 different types of people, and then it doesn't go into a lot of specifics, but it does give parameters on their age.

- v. 2 we have older men
- v. 3 you need older women
- v. 4-5 you will also rely on younger women
- v. 6 we will also have younger men
- vs. 9-10 rounding up these folks, bondservants, the slaves



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This list of people at first glance is not what you may have chosen up front. Notice they weren't the professionals; they weren't made up of the predominantly working class with kids. They didn't necessarily have a ton of commitments or responsibilities. Here's what stood out to me: The older population has **time and money**, the younger population has **freedom and energy**, and the slave has all their **needs taken care**. What this group represents are people **without the cares of life** necessarily holding them down, they are free to live for God.

Paul likes this type for he recruits them all the time for ministry. In a talk on marriage and its' glorious goodness listen what he has to say as a conclusionary statement:

**1 Cor 7:7 ESV**

***7**I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.*

It is not a way of life for all people, but it is an honorable way, a way that has a unique placement in ministry. The end goal for every Christian is not marriage, although most of the time it is, BUT the **end goal for EVERY CHRISTIAN is service to the Kingdom.**

Many times, in churches we build up ministry, programs, and buildings around playgrounds, upward sports programming, and dual-purpose fellowship halls. Those things are important, and they have their place at a certain point in the life of the church, but **to plant a church** they are **not necessary** and can become **a strain** on the church if pursued too soon. Perhaps we have equated that people who are busy in life will be the best at being busy in the church?

Today our land is dotted here and there with old church buildings with playgrounds and empty classrooms. It may be a strategy worth looking at in the future to get churches to surrender pride and trade buildings when necessary for the sake of kingdom growth. According to Pauls' direction an old and dying church in our land can still be a part of something big, if they have the courage to team up with some youngsters who have the time and



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energy to start some new things. Why? Because it has always been about **Personnel not Programs.**

Now onto what do these seasoned folks look like:

## **2. It all starts with Holy Men not the Cultured Chameleon (v. 2)**

### **<sup>2</sup>Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled**

Alright, the first group of folks we are going to discuss is the **OLDER** men. πρεσβύτης (*presbytēs*); an elderly man. This word is used to describe the priest Zechariah in Luke 1:18 when the angel told him in his old age he would have a child, JB. Paul also uses word to describe himself in Phil 1:9. It is a word in the Greek that doesn't mean in a walker yet but that you are done with having kids, whether by choice or physical limitations.

When does one become an older man? We know from ancient Greek literature that the word translated 'older' was used for someone as young as fifty. So maybe we should take fifty as a general rule of thumb. And if you are around that age and consider yourself a borderline case at best, well, you are, by your own admission, at or near the border! You need to heed the apostle's teaching as well!<sup>1</sup>

These gents, and we will call them that, I heard it once say by a famous older man, that you have to be a man before you can be a gentlemen, meaning that you have had to pass through the trials of manhood and survive, to have earned the title gentlemen, so we will call these guys gentlemen. They have three qualities that Paul wants to see:

**Sober-minded:** This gentleman has lived enough life that he is on the other side of being reliant on human vices. He no longer must have that drink at the end of the day or the middle of the day for that matter. His enjoyment of tobacco is not counted as a 1 pack or two pack a day thing. Eating and cooking is not a hobby as shown by the ever-increasing belt line. Sex drive doesn't consume him, but it is kept in its' place in his life. Sober-minded means all his tasters for this life have been tamed, he's **moderate**, the flesh is

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<sup>1</sup> Campbell, D. (2007). [Opening up Titus](#) (p. 46). Leominster: Day One Publications.



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to be enjoyed as one of God's of good creations not exploited to elevate it to worship status.

**Dignified:** This gentleman is 'worthy of respect', 'serious', 'respectable' and doesn't play the fool like the younger generation. It is not saying that that it is inappropriate for older men to have fun. But what Paul does mean is that the **fun** must be **kept in bounds**. Older gentlemen don't play the fool therefore they have a seriousness to them that reflect in their life and their seriousness towards God.

**Self-controlled:** The gentleman shares this quality with the older man that has been called to lead the church (1:8). Everything he does shows his sense and sensibility to how he lives, what decisions he makes, the counsel he gives, all have the **stamp of balance**. He's still a man, so he will take risks because men are called to be fighters, gatherers, and providers, but his calculations are shrewd and when a plan of attack is planned the strength of actions is based more on wisdom than youthful vigor.

Now why are we calling these traits **Holy**? Did we pull them from the law, from the Pentateuch, did Jesus give these traits as what all men should aspire to. Well, yes He did, for Jesus is the author and editor-in-chief for all of God's Word. So, what is Holiness?

**2 Cor 7:1 ESV**

"Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing **holiness** to completion in the fear of God." – (holiness is distancing from worldly defilements.)

**1 Pet 1:15-16 ESV**

<sup>15</sup> but as he who called you is holy, you also be **holy** in all your conduct, <sup>16</sup> since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." (holiness images Christ so it is to be desired)



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The word Holy comes from ἅγιος (*hagios*). adj. **holy, set apart, consecrated, dedicated, saints**<sup>2</sup> Paul is merely giving the description for what a Holy person in Crete would look like – as you look at these three descriptions (v.2), they are the exact opposite of what a Cretan is, for they were known as liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons (1:12). An older Cretan man is not a gentleman, no, unfortunately, he looks more like **Johnny Depp**, who has now embodied Jack Sparrow for real. A Cretan older man's vices have caught up with him and he's living in the hell of a **youth sized lust** trapped in an older man's body. That's what a **cultured chameleon** is, they just blend in they never stand out! An old Cretan blends in and fades away in population.

Our world has no idea of what an older man, a gentleman should look like, and that's why you need them so desperately in the church. **Our world glorifies the destruction of one's life in the pursuit of happiness, while the dignified have had false pity heaped on them as if it was shameful to act out of earned wisdom.** This is resource desperately needed in the church today, Godly, seasoned Holy men, that know how to take risk for the sake of the Gospel and the fame of Jesus.

- Holy Men that call out the younger men out on being lazy, in their jobs, marriage, and church life.
- Holy Men that go to the council/city/school meetings and let their leaders in the community know they are under watch.
- Holy Men that know how not to be a lover of money but help younger couples grab hold of their finances, so they become not enslaved.
- Holy Men that step into church roles because they have assumed ownership in God's Kingdom.

The call of the Gospel is to come and die, and the greater the sacrifice for the Kingdom the greater the GLORY and the longer that heritage is left behind! Let me call on the older people here within the sound of my voice. There is work for you here at HCC, don't you go running off looking for some retirement village down the road with an active adult class. NO! You got things to do here and if I gotta stay... then so do you! ☺

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<sup>2</sup> Kwok, H.-L. (2014). [Holiness](#). D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.





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**3. It all starts with the Gospel-Aged not the Worldly Wise (vs. 2)**

<sup>2</sup>Older men are to be ... **sound** in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

As we said earlier this type of man, has been aged like a fine wine, he has spent a season in his new skin as a Christian, he has practiced life as a changed man, he has gotten some bumps, cuts, and bruises along the way. What may have made him physically old, tired, and gray has made him spiritually spry, stout, & strong. Jacob fought with God and walked away with a limp and every older man worth following has wrestled with God and has learned a **lesson of humility**.

The gentleman we are talking about has modeled Christ as when He drank the cup of God's wrath down to the dregs, the Gospel-aged man drinks down the Truth of God's Gospel, and instead of death it brings life. The pain we now feel in life does not lead to death, but it leads to an ever-increasing realization of a better life is still to come. The Gospel is sound, it is healthy, but the cure of the Gospel still leads to a death in this physical life. A Gospel-aged man, no longer fears death though but embraces it, for to him it means he will be changed in the blink of an eye (1 Cor 15:51).

These next 3 things that Paul wants Titus to look for are things that are grown in a man they don't just show up overnight:

**Sound** in faith - healthy in faith they have gone through enough in their lives that in dark times they lived out this truth: *"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."* (Rom 8:28) These men have lost loved ones, have lost jobs, have been slandered, have been hospitalized and near death, and have been abandoned but they have become like Paul - "For me to live is Christ and to die is Gain" - Phil. 1:21

**Sound** in love - healthy in love means that they not only can give it, but they can take it. Yes, we need to read 1 Cor 13 again and see how their love shows that, BUT does their love cover a multitude of sins (1 Pet 4:8). In other words,



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they can walk around and say *I love you* at the drop of a hat, but are they a Steven in Acts when his own people were stoning him and says, “Lord forgive them for they know not what they do!”

**Sound** in steadfastness – healthy in perseverance and patience they have learned to wait upon the Lord, (Psalm 123:2) like Christ they are reserved, they can endure a time of waiting, they don’t deter easily, and understand good things/God things come to those that wait.

These types of men have been aged by God while the **worldly wise** have enough time under their belts to be marketed as wine but taste like vinegar still. The worldly-wise man always looks for the quickest and fastest way out of an uncomfortable situation and looks for the quickest way to make a buck! The Gospel-aged man learned the lesson of Jacob that a birthright forced or a birthright despised like Esau causes problems for the whole family!

These men are so desperately needed that not only should we be looking and welcoming them, we should ensure that we are developing a place where they can age. Now as a Lesson for the Church this morning what do we all walk away with this morning?

**[CHALLENGE/APPLICATION]**

**We honor God by honoring them.**

**Leviticus 19:32 ESV**

<sup>32</sup>“You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.”

**Job 12:12 ESV**

<sup>12</sup>Wisdom is with the aged,  
and understanding in length of days.

Honoring the Older Man, means we need to treat them better than what we think we should. We should be slow to speak and quick to hear. As elders we find them and train them, as a body we cherish them and back them, and as



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leaders in the church we submit to them humbly. I don't have a lot of regrets from my church life in Florida but one of them is that I never spent enough time with the gentlemen who were the backbone of that church, and I never served them enough, but I always benefitted from their service.

**We honor God by listening to them.**

**Psalm 92:14 ESV**

<sup>14</sup> They still bear fruit in old age;  
they are ever full of sap and green,

These people never run out of things to teach us. Today the world is always throwing at us new ways of understanding what we see and most of it is reprocessed or garbage. A Gospel-aged gentleman remembers the last time a lie was sold to them and the trouble it caused. Right now, the church in America is under fire for the younger generation is caught in the grasp that they think they know what is right and they think they know how to fix things, which is burn it all down and start over. Older gentlemen know how to problem-solve it is how they have persevered. You practice godly humility and submission find a Gospel-aged gentleman, put yourself under his authority, and actually follow what he tells you.

**We honor God by emulating them.**

**Proverbs 16:31 ESV**

<sup>31</sup> Gray hair is a crown of glory;  
it is gained in a righteous life.

At some point you have to trust the process that God has laid out for us. We don't try to become clones of anyone but what we are looking for is an older man that has a worn look to Him because His wrestling with God has changed Him. You want your own grey hair one day, a crown of glory? Then learn from them, emulate their submission to Christ, emulate their detest for sin, emulate their joy over persecution, even when it doesn't make sense. Through that discipline you will be pleasantly surprised to discover that you too actually have been growing into the image of Christ.



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Family, let me just say having a church that is worth its' salt in this world starts with personnel not programs, and it starts with some Gospel-aged Gentlemen to lead out on our part of the Great Commission. My thanks in here to you older gentlemen that have stuck around, and I encourage the rest of you to get to know them better. Lastly, I exhort us all to contribute to this endeavor, to foster a place that honors the well aged, for the church will need that resource in the days to come.

**[PRAYER]**

**[COMMUNION]**

**[BENEDICTION]**

Go in the name of the Father, that provided for the church older men to help lead us into spiritual maturity.

Go in the name of the Son, that provided for the church the older men needed to express His care for His bride.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that changed and seasoned these men and is currently seasoning/aging you to be a Gospel-aged saints, ready to sacrifice for the church of today.